

ATTICA STATE PRISON

PRISON

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PENITENTIARY

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Brief Seeks Changes for Female Inmates

Women in Prisons

Pat Ryan

The Women's Liberation movement has approximately 160 enthusiastic rooters down in that historical old city of Kingston. These are the inmates of Canada's women's penitentiary: a sad doomed anachronistic old pile of rock that should be considered one of the nation's national disgraces. The Canadian Penitentiary Services keeps throwing out rumours every once in awhile that the old pile of stones built in the mid-nineteenth century will be relegated to the trash-pile of history but when the CPS has only 160 human souls to consider out of a penitentiary population of 9,500 it's not hard to understand why the girls are among the forgotten children in society's human garbage dumps.

Very little information seeps out to the general public regarding the women's pen. *Transition* has no contacts inside the institution and depends on the Elizabeth Fry Society as its source of news. Occasionally one meets a girl who's served time there and even allowing for the normal slanted criticisms all of us are guilty of it must be a pretty grim joint. The ex-inmates one does meet appear bruised mentally, physically and definitely, morally. Regardless of how they try to present a brash toughness there's an aura of fear that walks with them like a shadow, like they've taken a psychological beating. This isn't to say they've been physically mauled by the staff, although that isn't impossible, but anyone who's been in similar circumstances to these women knows that a whole series of huge and little daily flicks from the lashes of restrictions, antagonisms, frustrations, all the agonizing things the human being isn't born into this world to suffer, can end up psychologically scarred forever. That's the impression one is left with after meeting one of Kingston's graduates.

The Elizabeth Fry Society — the hand-maiden of the John Howard Society — has recently presented an extensive brief to the National Advisory Committee on the female offender. It's a good brief, the result of a lot of research into problems pertaining to female offenders, and if even half of it is implemented will result in a lot of necessary and valuable changes.

Three aims outlined in the brief: (1) convicted persons should be able to speak for themselves; (2) have adequate free legal aid; (3) and enjoy a whole range of our civil rights, are goals that should be enjoyed by all convicted persons, not just females. It also states that incarceration, except for social defence, should be

eliminated and that more use of suspended sentences, probation and use of attendance centers should be utilized. Another indignity all convicted people suffer from that raises the hackles of the EFS is the loss of citizenship rights, not only while imprisoned but after their release. The brief flits around a fact that any so-called rehabilitated ex-con knows: all the rehabilitation programs, the sermons, the mouthings of social workers, the strivings of do-gooders never rehabilitated an individual in history. All they can contribute is aid to the individual who has decided within himself-herself that their trip is a bummer and that life holds more joys than being sloughed up behind prison walls has to offer. And with a recognition at last of this truth the brief points out that most of the therapeutic programs in existence or planned for the future are useless unless the inmate participates on a volunteer basis.

The ESP brief, has 51 recommendations: far too many to cover in depth in this article. However, many of the more pertinent ones deserve publicity. For instance, pregnancy is a fact of life and a percentage of girls sentenced to prison arrive in that delicate condition. It's the opinion of the people who set out the rules governing incarceration that a woman in prison is like an animal and not fit mentally or morally to be a mother. Just like an animal, when she has a child it's snatched away from her and disappears into the labyrinth machinery of the welfare machine regardless of the emotional trauma this creates in the mother. The brief feels very strongly about this and recommends that a separate nursing unit be set up for mother and child so that she may keep her child. Whatever plans pertaining to the mother and her baby she should at least have a say and not be relegated to the position of a cow in the barn and considered as a bovine.

Another concern of EFS for the women in Kingston is the lack of psychiatric treatment. One ex-inmate reported that there's one psychiatrist for the 160 girls. Every 15 days she has to review all prescriptions, interview each person with an emotional problem, make out the usual number of bureaucratic triplicate forms and try to give therapy. The result is that it usually takes about three weeks for someone needing the doctor's attention to get it. Sometimes it's too late and the sick person has gone around the bend or committed suicide. It would appear, also, that there are no separate facilities for the mentally ill and they are kept with the

rest of the population. The brief recommends that drastic steps be taken to remedy these conditions.

Although about one-third of all admissions to the women's pen are drug addicts it appears there is no program or specific treatment for these unfortunates. The brief recommends this should be investigated.

Is it recognized that the present building is ancient, depressing and is more of a museum than a home for humans? However, research by criminologists has turned up the ridiculous fact that when such monstrosities are replaced with modern cheerful facilities judges assume that they are doing the convicted a big favor by permitting them to enjoy such an environment with the result prison populations double. The brief recognizes that the present women's pen isn't fit for human habitation but instead of recommending its replacement, puts its emphasis on more uses of suspended sentences, etc., by the courts.

The location of the women's pen creates a traumatic problem for many of the inmates. The population is shunted there from all over the nation. A large percentage come from Vancouver. The rare one from the Maritimes. And occasionally the prairies contributes one or more of their wild roses or tiger lilies. Regardless of where the girls call home they do have some place that is just that. And they have families. Most of them have husbands or boy-friends just like any other girls in society. The dude may not be the most acceptable individual to square society. He may be a lean, strung-out, half-assed pimp. Or he might be wanted every place but home. But he's hers. And at the time of her incarceration they had their dreams, their schemes, their ratty little lives. But it was all the love they knew or needed. And for the majority of the girls, the mere fact that they were arrested and convicted, many of them drug addicts, is indicative that their families aren't listed in Who's Who. The economic factors connotated means that many of these girls get sent up and are abruptly, for economic reasons, cut off from all physical contact with their families, lovers and friends. Anyone who's ever experienced being in a position where one clings to the outside world through the futile media of correspondence knows that usually the letters grow fewer and fewer and finally just stop. What a sad, grey sick day that is. Regardless of how people like the members of the Elizabeth Fry Society and all the other kind of people try to fill that vacuum left, they just can't fill up the emptiness. That's when resentment, bitterness, all the negative things creep in to create that cancer that eats away at the soul. The EFS brief is cognizant of this problem. Among its recommendations that visits be permitted from anyone, that the visiting rooms be furnished to provide comfort and privacy and that visitors from distant places be provided with lengthy periods of visiting time and even overnight accommodations, the most important recommendation is that those from far places be given transportation costs and the expenses of their visits be paid for by the government. Naturally, we all recognize that such a recommendation is an exercise in futility, a search for the fulfillment of a utopian dream. Yet, it is the answer to the cause of many human beings who finds themselves sliding down the chute into

moral extinction. Prisons are visualized as the incubator of homosexuality. This is not true. Thousands of ex-cons can verify that they have gone through prison experiences and have never been subjected to homosexuality. But it's a fact of life in women's pens all over the world that the guardian staff of such institutions have depended upon the masculine muscle and the twisted mentality of the 'butch' lesbian to keep the other broads in line. Irene Blenkiron, formerly a psychiatric nurse and at present a classification officer at the B.C. penitentiary, relates in the June 1974 issue of Discussion, the publication of the Canadian Penitentiary Service, her experience when she escorted two women from Okalla, B.C., to the Kingston women's pen, how terrified the two young girls she escorted were when she delivered them and they saw this masculine muscled 'butch' waiting inside the gate to welcome them to their new home. The girls instinctively knew, knowledge re-inforced by old-timers at Oakalla, that homosexuality was a recognized part of their initiation to Kingston. It's just another facet of the brutalizing rehabilitation program for women inmates.

Recommendations for two unique innovations are interesting to speculate on but doomed to obscurity. They are for the installation of a letter-box for daily pickup where inmates can just drop their letters in just like outside folks. Such an innovation is a threat to the old traditional kite-line and would take a lot of fun out of romancing. The other innovation suggested is for the installation of a pay phone booth. Anybody gotta slug?

A very intense recommendation deals with the subject of confinement conditions in the pen. It seems that the ladies, regardless of Women's Lib, share one thing in common with male penitentiary inmates. They, too, have what is euphemistically referred to as segregation — 'the hole'. However, it appears that in the women's pen this private domain is not used only for punishment cells as intended but is also used to hide away psychiatric patients, protective custody, anyone feeling the necessity to withdraw from the obnoxious existence of the daily prison grind. Naturally, the members of Elizabeth Fry abhor such conditions and vehemently recommend that the sick be confined in the hospital quarters and others not under sentence to the hole for institutional violations at least be included in the human race.

They also recommend that prisoners be permitted to enter their cells after work hours if they feel so inclined. The only assumption one can arrive at from this is that the inmates, regardless that privacy is one of life's greatest gifts, are forced to socialize regardless of how they may be screaming inside from the frustrations, the turmoil, the sorrows everyone experiences. The following quote from the brief tells a whole story in a few words:

"That a room be available for voluntary segregation — a quiet room — or preferably access by inmates to their own rooms after working hours to provide for some privacy.

"That the use of voluntary segregation or private quarters be in no way penalized or seen as inappropriate or anti-social."

The June issue of Discussion, the CPS publication, has a story about the introduction of an annex at the pen. This annex in the house once used by the warden was the result of overcrowding in the main prison. At the time the article was written it was the first introduction for women to what one could call a half-way house. But the insidious revelation that seeps out from between the lines as one reads the article is that because of the extreme observance of their prisoner's code volunteer help groups have no success with the girls. Inmates getting day passes to work down town, or those favored with other rehabilitative relaxations of the punitive system nonchalantly accepted in the male penitentiaries, seem to suffer the terrifying pain of ostracism. It's tragic that humans, through fear, must deny themselves means to beat the system and sacrifice their hopes for



rehabilitative aids because of an anachronistic penal code that was good in the days of the 'silent system' but is no longer applicable.

Another recommendation made has merit. This one suggests that ex-inmates be employed on the staff or be permitted to work with confined inmates on a volunteer basis. The province of Saskatchewan has been experimenting in this arena with good success. There are ex-inmates on the staff of the provincial jail at Regina Correctional Center. One would expect all kinds of problems to result from such a unique departure from the status quo but actually it works very good. However, the ex-con turned screw must be an exceptionally unique person. He must have a reputation as a solid dude when he was doing time. A fink con would only be another fink screw. One of his great difficulties is to retain the old friendships and yet keep remote from getting involved from the many propositions tossed his way. And just as Alcoholics Anonymous owes its success to the fact that no one can talk to a lush like another lush, the same is true for the empathy between cons and ex-cons.

The new system being introduced of provincial governments accepting prisoners sentenced to the penitentiary should be ideal for the recommendation of the brief deploring the separation geographically of women prisoners from the environs of their home.

There are many other common sense recommendations included in the brief. The important conclusion one arrives at when studying the brief is that women federal prisoners, because they are really a minority group, have problems male prisoners don't have. Regardless of how male chauvinistic one may be towards Women's Lib the general philosophy of the movement definitely should apply to this forgotten segment of our society. It doesn't take the mentality of any genius to recognize that women have been exploited throughout history and still are. Even in the wasteland us people who have been outlaws inhabit, women don't escape exploitation. (This doesn't refer to the chick stupid enough to hand over her bread to a pimp. If she chooses to be a silly fool she's not being exploited, she's insane.) The greatest offenders of female exploitation in the ghettos of the hustlers' world are the police. Penitentiaries are full of dudes who were forced to cop out because if they didn't the fuzz would send their old lady up for some trumped up charge. That's only one example. But the Canadian Penitentiary Service branch should not take advantage of the female prisoners simply because they are such a minor fragment of the prison population. They are just as human as any of the other 9,500 inmates. They feel, they hurt, they observe and they think. And just like everybody else someday they come out. When they come out they are naturally assimilated back into this vague thing called society. Their experiences while confined can play a big role on the kind of person edging into the outside world. One little human slipping into the chaotic turmoil of society may seem unimportant. But just like a pebble tossed into a pond that little human creates its own individual ripples. Lets hope that the lordly bureaucrats who will receive and ponder this brief will in a moment of wisdom act on it.

Bail Legislation: Reform or Regression

During the past year Canada's "law and order" lobby has become very loud in demanding fundamental changes in the Bail Reform act which was passed into law in 1972. The lobby has begun to work its insidiously undemocratic effect. Justice Minister Otto Lang has announced that change is in the works and that it will "tighten up" the Act, which is actually a section of the Criminal Code.

The lobby has a front-page voice throughout Canada — which only means it can make news, not necessarily sense.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Vancouver went to the press with the contention that the Bail Act helps drug traffickers by permitting them quick and easy release.

The Police Association of Nova Scotia has gone on police record stating that issuance of a summons by police rather than outright arrest of suspected offenders was resulting in more crimes by the suspects.

The Ottawa Chief of Police tells us, again via the public press, that bail skipping has tripled since the new Act was implemented.

The Toronto Chief of Police reports flatly that the Bail Act is not working, and that half of the people arrested in Metro Toronto every week are already out on bail for other charges.

All these noises, combined with the hue and cry over the capital punishment issue, aren't exactly conducive to permitting intelligent, realistic and, it might be added, responsible assessment of the new Act's effects, whether debilitating or beneficial.

For example, even under the old form of the Bail Act, drug traffickers in Vancouver always seemed able to make bail because their connections in the criminal community were and still are such as could get them reasonably good lawyers and "professional bondsmen" who could arrange to have cash or property bail paid very handily. The new Act makes the procedure a little more convenient, but in no way is it turning out craven traffickers to prey on the community.

The example from Nova Scotia is perhaps more telling. C-218, the current Bail Act provides that the issuance of summons as an alternative to arrest and detention is at the discretion of the police in most cases. All the Police Association of Nova Scotia is actually telling us, therefore, is that its members are not too discreet. Hardly can this be blamed on the Act.

The Ottawa example is a fascinating absurdity. It notes that bail skipping has tripled since the Act was implemented; and so it may have. However, no mention was made that the number of people issued bail may also have tripled. There is no need to add that population has increased somewhat, or that the crime rate has increased. If skipping has increased only in numbers proportionate to the increase in those bailed, then only increase (per se) becomes academic.

The Toronto Chief of Police has been most emphatic. He came into the fray as pure Cassandra. After noting there has been an 84 percent increase in the number of people released on bail he boldly stated that "50 percent of the crimes are committed by repeaters." And here is the crux, he lumps those on bail, probation, and parole. Probationers and parolees are not even in the same ball park. Later on in his article, the Chief lets us know that his 84 percent figure was for violators of some federal statutes only. The actual overall increase turns out to be a mere 31 percent. As for the number who skipped their bail; well, on the basis of the Chief's own statistics: the actual increase has been a shade more than 1 percent — yes, all this hue and cry and breastbeating for a shade more than 1 percent between 1972 and 1974.

The use of statistics for propaganda purposes is an old and effective game. For example, when we take the Toronto figures and compose them our way we get a much different emphasis and meaning from them than if we accepted them the way they were originally offered in the Toronto Daily Star, yet our way of interpreting them is just as valid as his. But we admit statistics can be loaded; the Daily Star feeds them out like pap to the masses. The fault is not the Police Chiefs, we suspect. (His picture was in the paper and he looks kindly and understanding. Really!).

For instance, he tends in the article to disregard the year 1973, the first full year of the new Act. Bail skipping in Toronto nearly doubled that year, even though it did level itself in 1974 at the 1972 percentage. Partly this can be attributed to a staggering jump in the number of charges laid, the resultant strain on the Metro Toronto justice system, and partly that justice system trying to weed through the mystifying complexities of the Act.

The Police Departments and Justices in this country cannot be faulted for their concern unless — and unless should be emphasized; some of them are deliberately using their discretionary powers to sabotage the Act. This is not an idle supposition. In some locales it could be what's happening. The best way to get a law wiped out; e.g. Prohibition laws; is to demonstrate that it is inoperable.

But, let us presume that this is not the case. Let us instead look at the problems the Act was meant to solve and then look at whether it has achieved this.

Of this there is a fine example, either of abuse or confusion. In a recent issue of a Saskatchewan newspaper was an article about the notorious Catroni, suspected of being a leader of Quebec's organized crime, and already sentenced to several years imprisonment in the United States (as yet unserved) being granted bail in Quebec pending his appeal of a conviction. And in the same paper was an article about 100 people in Regina signing a petition to prevent a juvenile being bailed on a non-capital murder charge, — he, at least, hasn't yet been convicted of anything but they want him jailed. No

one petitioned to keep Catroni locked up.

The realities faced by the House of Commons in 1971, when the new Act was being debated were clearly stated.

John Turner, who was then Justice Minister, had this to say:

"... there is indication that those who are held under pretrial detention will have a lesser opportunity for an acquittal and, certainly, they will have less of an opportunity to present a reasonable defence and assemble the evidence necessary for that defence.

"I think we cannot ignore the high incidence of guilty pleas by persons who are detained and kept in custody under pre-trial detention."

Other evidence was presented during the debates which indicated that not only were more guilty pleas obtained from the pre-convicted jailed, these people were also given stiffer sentences. — indication of two monstrous inequities.

Loss of employment, income, and protection for one's family were also scored off as problems for the vast number of those "remanded in custody".

The failure to use summons or release on recognizance also came in for criticism. A long term study of bail in Toronto showed that when cash or property bail was set, 62 percent of the people couldn't meet it and, more significant, of those for whom bail was set at \$500.00 cash or property, 60 percent couldn't make it.

Add to this another quote from the debate that "there is no evidence . . . that wealthy people are more prone to show up for their trial than those without influence and wealth, yet there is evidence that more poor people are arrested than are people with "influence and wealth". Two more items fill out the picture, one of which is rarely mentioned: rarely is cash or property bail attached in full or substantial part of someone skipped. Moreover — and this holds just as true today as in 1971 or 1901 — the predictability of flight or the commission of additional offences is almost nil. Past criminal record, presumably the big clue to Parole Boards and the like, has long been shown to be a totally inadequate measure of parole success or failure, and so it is, if not more so to the judge in setting bail or the policeman in deciding to proceed by summons or arrest.

The new Act was meant to resolve a lot of long-standing ills in our criminal justice system. One which few people outside this system knew about was the "bondsman" racket, and how it not only profited from exorbitant rates of interest but encouraged crime. In some cities; fences for stolen goods doubled as bondsmen, thus keeping thieves on the streets and necessitating continued stealing. In the east, no measure can be made of how the illegal "bondsman business" acted as a forerunner to the organized loansharking which now plagues most major urban centers in Ontario and Quebec.

David MacDonald, MP from Prince Edward Island, brought some special experience to bear during the debates in 1971:

"Having spent some time working in prisons and



penitentiaries, particularly in prisons where men are usually detained before trial, I know the kind of debilitating effect which may occur, particularly to individuals who for the first time find themselves in the worst kind of social conditions in our provincial and municipal institutions of incarceration.

"I think it is a sad comment on our system of penology that those who first run afoul of the law are thrown into conditions that cannot help but influence them to becoming increasingly antisocial and at odds with society in general. It would perhaps be useful if more of our public leaders and members of this House would visit people being held before trial or would talk to those who have had this experience. There is no doubt in my mind that if incarceration does not immediately affect the progress of the trial, it certainly has a disastrous, long-term effect on the accused."

To what extent has the new Act solved these "inequalities before the law" and blatant encouragements for criminal activity?

While it must be conceded that the new Act provides no more effective guidelines than did the old Act, at



least judicial discrimination against the poor and every Canadian minority except the affluent has been substantially lessened. The Executive Director of the Canadian Civil Liberties and Human Rights Association says that possibly 60 percent of those now released couldn't be previously simply because they didn't have the money.

Also, with guilty pleas taking a skid downward, police now have to put more work into gathering evidence for convictions. Combine this with rising crime rates and the failure to get the budgets they want (and probably need, given their current methods of operating); and the police departments and overburdened courts probably have every reason to scream — every reason but the new Act.

The new Act can be harped on for quite different reasons, some of them reasons about which the government was cautioned during the 1971 debates.

An Opposition member reminded the House that the new Bill was a "colossus of complexities", even though John Turner argued that its guidelines were clear-cut. Turner was "up his ass", to put it bluntly, and the Opposition was right to point out the complexities — it is difficult for a lawyer to understand, let alone interpret. And for a policeman or a justice to interpret it, sometimes in trying situations, is to expect the Second Coming yesterday.

Has the Justice Department authorized the kind of money it takes to provide recruit and in-service training for police? Has the Canadian Association of Police Chiefs? Has any other part of the justice system, from Ottawa to all of the municipalities? Or have the efforts at training been only lip service affairs? We suspect only the last question can be answered with a "yes".

If I was a cop (which I'm not for reasons obvious to those who know me), I would scream bloody murder because I would recognize I was being set up by the politicians and the bureaucrats, but I wouldn't attack the Act because the problem is not the Act itself, the problem is the failure of the government to provide the

"extras" that are essential if the Act is to work properly.

What are these extras? Training is a principal one. Police should be trained in how to use the Act. They should know clearly where their discretion lies; similarly the courts.

Bail skippers should be pursued and prosecuted with as much zeal as any other offender. Too often, little or no effort is made to track them down.

Where there is possibility someone may skip or commit further offences, that someone should have to report regularly to police and police should be empowered to issue a warrant if that someone fails to report.

People who skip bail should be exposed publicly and in cases when cash or property is put up, it should be attached in totality by the courts.

Perhaps one of the hardest problems is not in the area of bail, but the area of arrest.

The discretionary powers to arrest or summons which is laid on the police can only be used effectively and responsibly if the police know their patrol areas intimately. In short, a high profile preventive form of policing is meant and this translates simply as "putting the cop back on the beat", the only way he can get to know his area and the people in it. The police are reluctant to do this in many areas. They perhaps feel safer sloughed up in their patrol cars with their partner and their riot gun but fact is this approach is not community policing, it is occupation soldiering, and it must end just as surely as the old Bail Laws had to end.

The Act is going to be changed — whether it is changed to resolve its difficulties or changed to satisfy the law and order lobby is in the hands of Otto Lang.

He would do well to keep in mind a Chinese proverb which came via another Saskatchewan MP, J. Diefenbaker, during the 1971 Bail debate: "a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." Should the law and order lobby force us to take one step backward, after that — how far?

The Right to Vote

Bill C-222

Bill C-222, The Proposed amendment to change the Electoral Act so that prisoners can vote, is still alive in Parliament.

Below is a brief submitted to government by La Ligue des Droits de L'Homme, a major civil liberties organization in Quebec.

Mr. Rod Blaker
President of the Committee
of Privilege and Elections
Vanguard Building
Ottawa, Ont.

Montreal, Que.
March 24, 1975

Mr. President,

The office des Droits des Detenus of the Human Rights Association is asking the Canadian Parliament to present Bill C-222 to the House, once again and is sending you certain considerations and recommendations to that effect.

At the last session, parliament introduced in vain, for the third time, this Bill to repeal the clause of the electoral law relating to the disability of a detained person to exercise his civil rights in a federal election.

In the Act as it stands now, the loss of civil rights is a consequence resulting from imprisonment in a penal institution, for all infractions of a federal, provincial or municipal law.

The Act then ties in this disability to the fact of imprisonment whether it be in a prison or in a penitentiary. One may deduce from the formulation of clause 14 (4)e) of the Act that whoever has had a suspended sentence and is on probation or whoever is on a conditional release for example, could vote in a federal election. The text also leads us to understand that the incarcerated accused person who is waiting for trial could vote since the disability described in the Act is a consequence of the punishment.

In the mind of the Office des Droits des Detenus, this disability of the prisoner to exercise his civil rights remains as a trace of the concept of civil degradation long associated with the status of prisoner.

However, nowadays, at least in the province of Quebec all forms of civil degradation have been abolished from the civil code. We read that all human beings possess juridical personality and are holders of fundamental liberties such as freedom of conscience, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom to peaceful demonstration and freedom of association. The Canadian Declaration of Human Rights also reaffirms these principles for all human beings and one could expect that the right to vote, one of the most important manifestations of these fundamental liberties be guaranteed in the electoral act.

There is no doubt in our mind that this disability to exercise civil rights, created by the electoral act perpetuates the idea that the prisoner is not a person, that he is but a degraded civilian. This philosophy seems to us to be incompatible with that of rehabilitation.

If rehabilitation aims essentially at the reintegration of the prisoner into society, it must have as corollary the valorization, during detention of the social order that the prisoner will have to share once he has recovered his freedom. Would it not be opportune to assure that the prisoner would learn to become a citizen again by permitting him to exercise the right that is the expression of that statute?

The Office des Droits des Detenus does not fully understand the penal philosophy that upholds the disability created by the electoral Act. It must be understood that whoever has been imprisoned for having committed a similar infraction finds himself unable to exercise his right to vote. The imprisonment as a particular form of sanction and not the nature or the seriousness of the infraction committed brings about the deprivation of civil rights and in this regard, the electoral legislation perpetuates the idea that prison is conceived apart from society.

We must not only consider that imprisonment brings about the loss of civil rights but that in effect, incarceration has prevented prisoners who had never lost their civil rights from exercising them. The Office des Droits des Detenus has become aware that the accused persons, detained in prisons or in prevention centers were not able to take advantage of the exercise of their civil rights because it was alleged that they had conserved their domicile in the electoral constituency of their respective place of origin and that it depended on the incarcerating authority of each prevention center to permit an accused person waiting for trial to go vote in his constituency.

It is evident for the Office des Droits des Detenus that the material impossibility for these accused persons to exercise their civil rights is equivalent to a disability of

Bill C-222, The Proposed amendment to change the Electoral Act so that prisoners can vote, is still alive in Parliament.

Below is a brief submitted to government by La Ligue des Droits de L'Homme, a major civil liberties organization in Quebec.

Monsieur le Président,

L'Office des Droits des Détenus de la Ligue des Droits de l'Homme demande au Parlement canadien de présenter à nouveau le projet de loi C-222 à la session en cours et il vous envoie certaines de ses réflexions et de ses recommandations à cet effet.

À sa dernière session, le Parlement canadien déposait en vain pour la troisième fois ledit projet de loi pour abroger la disposition de la loi électorale canadienne relative à l'incapacité pour un détenu d'exercer son droit de vote à une élection fédérale.

Il faut lire dans la loi actuelle que la perte de cens électoral est une conséquence résultant de l'emprisonnement dans une institution pénale pour toute infraction à une loi fédérale, provinciale ou pour toute contravention à un règlement municipal.

La loi rattache donc cette incapacité au fait de l'emprisonnement que ce soit dans une prison ou un pénitencier; on peut déduire de la formulation de la disposition 14(4)e de la loi que celui qui s'est vu imposé une sentence suspendue assortie d'une probation ou celui qui est en libération conditionnelle par exemple, pourrait voter à une élection fédérale. Le texte nous laisse entendre d'autre part que la personne prévenue, incarcérée en attente de procès, pourrait voter puisque l'incapacité décrite dans la loi est une conséquence du châtiment.

Dans l'esprit de l'Office des Droits des Détenus, cette incapacité du détenu à exercer son droit de vote demeure un vestige du concept de dégradation civique qu'on a longtemps rattaché à la qualité de détenu.

Aujourd'hui, cependant, du moins dans la province de Québec, toute forme de dégradation civique a été abolie dans le code civil et toute être humain, y lit-on, possède la personnalité juridique et se trouve titulaire des libertés fondamentales telles la liberté de conscience, la liberté d'opinion et d'association. D'autre part, la Déclaration canadienne des droits réaffirme ces principes pour tous les êtres humains et l'on pourrait s'attendre à ce que le droit de vote, l'une des manifestations importantes de ces libertés fondamentales, soit garanti dans la loi électorale.

Il n'y a pas de doute à notre esprit que cette incapacité que crée la loi électorale perpétue l'idée que le détenu n'est pas une personne, qu'il est un dégradé civique, et cette philosophie nous apparaît incompatible avec l'idée de réhabilitation.

Si la réhabilitation vise essentiellement la réinsertion sociale du détenu, elle doit comporter comme corollaire la valorisation durant la détention des règles sociales que le détenu devra partager une fois sa liberté recouvrée. Ne serait-il pas opportun de faire en sorte que le détenu puisse apprendre à redevenir citoyen en lui permettant d'exercer le droit qui est l'expression même

de ce statut?

L'Office des Droits des Détenus comprend mal la philosophie pénale qui sous-tend cette incapacité créée par la loi électorale. Il faut actuellement comprendre que celui qui a commis un acte criminel pour lequel il a reçu une sentence suspendue n'est pas déchu de son droit de vote alors que celui qui a été emprisonné pour avoir commis une infraction sommaire se voit inhabile à voter. L'emprisonnement comme forme particulière de sanction et non la nature ou la gravité de l'infraction commise emporte la déchéance du droit de vote et à cet égard, la législation électorale perpétue l'idée que la prison est conçue hors la société.

Non seulement faut-il constater que l'emprisonnement entraîne la perte de droit de vote mais dans les faits, l'incarcération a empêché les prévenus qui n'avaient jamais perdu leur droit de vote de l'exercer. L'Office des Droits des Détenus a été à même de se rendre compte que les prévenus détenus dans les prisons communes ou dans des centres de prévention n'ont pu se prévaloir de leur droit de vote puisqu'on a allégué que ces derniers avaient conservé leur domicile dans le district électoral de leur provenance respective et qu'il dépendait des autorités carcérales de chacun des centres de prévention de permettre à un prévenu en attente de son procès d'aller voter dans sa circonscription électorale.

Il est donc évident pour l'Office des Droits des Détenus que l'impossibilité matérielle pour ces prévenus d'exercer leur droit de vote équivaut à une incapacité au même titre que celle prévue pour les détenus dans la loi électorale.

Conséquemment, l'Office des Droits des Détenus demande au Parlement canadien:

1. d'abroger l'article 14(4)e de la loi électorale du Canada qui rend les détenus inhabiles à voter.
2. de rédiger une disposition nouvelle dans la loi électorale par laquelle on stipule expressément que le détenu est censé avoir son domicile à l'institution où il se trouve incarcéré.
3. de rédiger une disposition nouvelle dans la loi électorale par laquelle on stipule expressément que le prévenu peut pour les fins d'élection élire domicile à l'institution qui le garde pendant qu'il attend son procès.

Nous croyons que l'adoption de ces nouvelles dispositions démontrera que le Parlement canadien accepte que la réhabilitation prenne un sens concret dans notre société si elle accepte de conférer à ses détenus le statut de citoyen.

Hélène Dumont
présidente
Office des Droits des Détenus

the same nature as that seen for prisoners in the Electoral Act.

Consequently, the Office des Droits des Detenus asks the Canadian Parliament:

1. to repeal article 14 (4)e of the electoral act of Canada that disenfranchises prisoners.
2. to draw up a new clause in the electoral act by which it is stipulated expressly that the prisoner is supposed to have his domicile at the institution where he is incarcerated.
3. to draw up a new clause in the electoral act by which it is expressly stipulated that the prisoner can for election purposes elect domicile at the institution in whose custody he is while waiting for his trial.

We believe that the adoption of these new clauses will demonstrate that the Canadian Parliament accepts that rehabilitation takes a concrete meaning in our society if it accepts to confer to its prisoners the status of citizen.

Helen Dumont
Presidente
Office des Droits des Detenus



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Regional Medical Centres

An "Inside Look"

Thanks to Brian Wagget

Informed consent, in case you were wondering, is what a doctor obtains from you when he wants you to *volunteer* for a treatment.

Not only does it release him from liability if he screws up — winning a malpractice suit against a doctor is almost impossible — it also means he must have informed you of what he intends doing, how he intends doing it, and what the possible side effects may be, good or bad.

Usually obtaining a patient's "informed consent" isn't a big thing. But where psychiatric treatment is concerned it is usually deception of a very sordid order. He can't tell you the outcome of most of the treatments in his warbag because he doesn't know himself. He justifies this in the humble manner of most scientists, and pseudoscientists, by saying something like "this treatment has helped some patients even though we haven't gathered the knowledge to know why, and ours is a very young science. We're still learning many things and have a long way to go yet, but we shall always hang in there trying to improve things for mankind. This is your big chance to help science, do some good for mankind, and maybe even get your parole. Even if our

treatment fails, you'll have made a positive contribution because being scientists, we learn from our mistakes too!"

Daniel Webster managed to talk his way out of his satonic pact. Too bad all of us prospective contractees aren't as fast talkers as old Daniel.

The United States Director of Federal Prisons Carlson recently announced immediate discontinuance of all behavior modification and aversive conditioning programs which were utilizing federal prison inmates as patients.

At the same time Director Carlson announced immediate discontinuance of all federal government funding to all agencies, institutions, and other level of government for behaviour modification and aversive conditioning programs which use prisoners of any kind as patients.

The decisions were based on the recommendations of a Senate Judiciary Subcommittee's findings which, among other things, found most such programs to be ineffective, scientifically questionable, and often cruel and inhuman. The Subcommittee, headed by Senator Sam Ervin Jr., who also headed the Watergate Hearings, decided that by the very nature of imprisonment, it was impossible for a prisoner to volunteer freely for any kind of treatment even though the prisoner may say otherwise.

The ban shut down millions of dollars of programs. More important, the ban was spearheaded by inmates.

Candidates for psychosurgery in RMC's — if ever they start — can be rest assured they'll be under knives of experienced psychosurgeons. One of the most active practitioners of psychosurgery was on (and may still be on) the Solicitor General's Psychiatric Advisory Board.



Blues

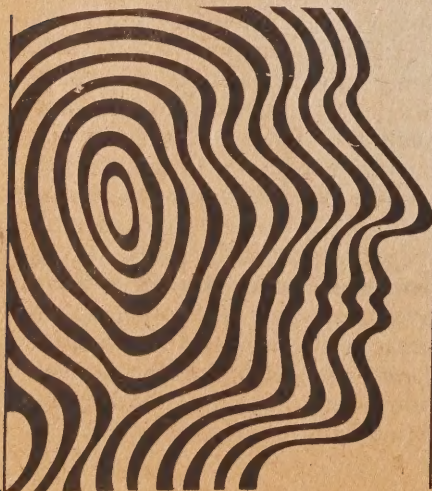
Pastor Neinuller, a German Lutheran who spent years in Hitler's concentration camps.

"When they came for the Jews I did not protest because I was not a Jew."

"When they came for the Union leaders, I did not protest because I did not belong to a union."

"When they came for the Catholics, I did not protest because I was not a Catholic."

"But when they came for me, there was no one left to protest to!"



U.B.C. psychiatrist charges prisoners driven insane.

Washington (AP) — A Senate judiciary subcommittee released testimony Saturday in which a Canadian psychiatrist said the Soviet Union uses psychiatric treatment and drugs to terrorize political prisoners.

The psychiatrist Dr. Norman Hirt of the University of B.C. medical school, presented the testimony to staff members of the internal security subcommittee on October 27, 1972.

The subcommittee decided last fall to release the testimony at the request of former Senator Edward Gurney (Rep. — Fla.) who had presided at an earlier hearing on related matters.

In the testimony, which was accompanied by articles and letters purported to be supporting the contentions, Hirt said Soviet secret police have used psychiatric procedures to send sane persons to mental institutions and have used chemicals and other methods to make sane persons insane.

His statements based in part on interviews with two former KGB secret police psychiatrists who left the Soviet Union, said a drug called reserpine was used to cause chemical destructions of parts of the brain.

He termed it "a deliberate form of chemical lobotomy" designed to destroy a person's original personality.

In addition to creating permanent brain damage, he said "a new

instrument of terror has been created", aimed at influencing other dissidents.

"The idea is obviously not only to end the spiritual life of the victim but also to terrorize his peers into silence," Hirt testified.

He estimated that as many as 7,000 persons may have been subjected to fake psychiatric "treatment" in the Soviet Union.

The subcommittee said Hirt has devoted much of his free time in recent years to the question of psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union and has interviewed a number of dissidents who were subjected to treatment.

(end of Sun Article).

April 8, 1975

On Regional Mind Control Centers

It is obvious to me that Dr. Norman Hirt of U.B.C. is ignorant. His ignorance may be deliberate in part and partly genuine. Here is a professional man who chooses to ignore the Canadian situation in regional mind control centers. The ironic part of the article in the Vancouver Sun paper is that all the abused he so elegantly states exist in the Soviet Union, have existed and will continue to exist in Canadian institutions where professionals like him rationalize such abuses.

"A drug called reserpine, which is supposed to cause chemical destruction of parts of the brain is apparently in use at Canadian Mind Control institutions.

A chemical lobotomy, in Canada would be rationalized by the professionals as being behavior modification. Of course in the Soviet Union it would be a chemical lobotomy." Of course the Canadian prison professionals see no evil, for many of their jobs are dependent upon them perpetuating medical and other abuses on prisoners in Canada's prisons. When they do tell the truth to the public they refer to foreign abuses. Now that the universities across Canada have signed working agreements recently with the Penitentiary system they will use prisoners as human guinea pigs to test out their ignorance of the causes of human behaviour. The short cut of the professionals ignorance will be reflected in their use of



behaviour modification drugs which most of even the prescribers of such drugs do not truly know their overall effects. Trial and error is the name of the game, control is their goal "Blind obedience to big brother." The ones who benefit by perpetuating human problems through ignorance, get the public's consent because the public is apathetic. It is time that professionals such as Hirt devoted their time to the question of psychiatric abuse under his nose as well as the Soviet Union. Of course I am a prisoner, although I have not been in one of Canada's regional mind control centers. I don't need to go there to know certain things are going on there. The favorite technique of those who know what really is going on is to try and discredit somebody like me. A professional would say I don't know the facts and I am probably just bitter. The issues would be ignored by the apologists for the existing order and, by a process of character assassination through labelling me, I would be discredited in the eyes of many people in the public. If the public wants to understand what is really going on in prisons they should personally get involved with the excons and other groups. To understand prisons one has to examine much varied knowledge concerning politics, law, psychiatry and many more areas. Prison is like a giant jigsaw puzzle: once you get aware of one area, you find other related areas which add to the confusion. Don't wait for big brother to make you aware, get rid of the Regional Mind Control Centers.



Propaganda is the Power of the Press

EDITORIAL: by Pat Ryan

Somewhere back in the shadows of antiquity some asthmatic old philosopher came out with the brilliant observation: "The pen is mightier than the sword." And in more modern times another shrewd dude stated something to the effect that he didn't give a damn who controlled the weapons just let him control the press. What they were both saying was that the spoken and written word is the most powerful force known to man.

Anthropologists and archaeologists scrounging around in their pedantic search into the remnants of creaky civilizations long dead and better forgotten have discovered that nothing new has been added and that our cavemen ancestors used their own communications media — paintings on the walls — to control the superstitious fears of the masses. Regardless of what era of man one digs into, one will always find that people have been pushed, led, and manipulated by the powers of the effective means of persuasion of that age. And at no time in the history of man has this been more true than it is now in our modern age; nor have there ever been more effective weapons of propaganda than our modern technology has evolved.

A couple hundred years ago some anti-social characters like Patrick Henry, Thomas Paine, old Tom Jefferson plotted against the established order of the good citizens and founded what became the American Constitution. At the time they were called hoodlums, anti-social criminals, rebellious bastards, all the adjectives the upright and uptight citizens of that age used to designate contemptible humans. Today these same dudes are considered historical heroes. Amongst the unsavory demands they fought for and which became an integral part of the Declaration of Independence was that controversial cry for Freedom of the Press. Regardless that like so many utopian theories this has turned out to be a farcical myth, an utter impossibility simply because it must be administered and utilized at the discretion of humans, the howls continue to echo that there must be press freedom. The bitter humor regarding this bit of insanity is that the gullible citizens are assured Freedom of the Press is not only guaranteed but does exist. And what really adds to the confusion is that the average John believes such an impossible improbability does really exist, which just goes to prove H.L. Menken's statement: "that no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the voter."

The purpose of this editorial is not to trot out all the obvious reasons to verify this truth. That would be an exercise in futility. It's also assumed that our readers are endowed with normal intelligence quite capable of arriving at intelligent conclusions as a result of their own observations and experiences. The great tragedy, however, is that because such a myth does exist many

members of minority groups have always suffered from the terrible injustices such a myth engenders.

Every newsman has suffered the futile indignity of having a real hot story killed because it involved one of the media's sacred cows: advertiser, politician, socialite or publisher's nephew. It doesn't do any good for the reporter to howl with the injustice of some poor slob with no connections being headlined on the front page in a previous issue for committing the same sins as the sacred cow. He must learn the facts of media existence! The vices of sacred cows are not for public consumption. This freedom of the press also works in reverse. Associations, political parties, individuals and causes that have clout with the media get publicity cooperation; those who haven't find they're relegated to obscurity or ridicule. That's what's known as freedom of the press. Once one gets over the agony of having a beautiful illusion shattered one can then understand how subtly the media becomes an instrument for propaganda.

That's sad!

Theoretically, propaganda doesn't have to be evil; unfortunately, it usually is. Propaganda, although the bastard child of facts, is never truth and never results in favorable opinions for its opponents. By suppression, altering reality, distorting truth, the subtle twisting of words, slanting editorial contents the media is able to put across any idea it wants to. Just to give a brief illustration of the power of words we'll assume that the inmates of some penal institution refuse to work as a form of protest. The two local newspapers both report the same story. One headlines the story:

INMATES ON STRIKE

The opposition paper says the same thing:

CONVICTS RIOT!

That's propaganda. The readers of one newspaper shrug and go on about their business; the readers of the other paper feel fear, rage and all the other sick emotions the publisher wanted them to feel. Propaganda usually appeals to the negative emotions in man and warps his reasoning abilities. The result is that thousands of destinies are changed and human lives destroyed through the machinations of propaganda.

The majority of our readers are either inmates or ex-inmates. Very few of us realize that not only have we been victims of propaganda in the past but still are and will continue to be. *Our treatment as individuals and as a segment of society is at the mercy of propaganda.* Propaganda dictates our sentences. Propaganda controls our pass privileges, our hopes of being a small integrated part of the community. It influences the parole system. No individual in our private little world can find a cave deep enough and black enough to escape its clutches. Propaganda is so insidious that the inventor

**Friend of inmates
says open the jails**

**Police criticize
newspaper stories**

**CONVICT IN COOLER
WHEN ESCAPE GOES BAD**

**18 killers
allowed out
on passes**

**Parts of gun
discovered in
shooting area**

**John Howard Caseload
Increased 66% In 1973**

Solitary confinement study urged

**Drug possessor given
30 months in prison**

**Knife-wielding
prisoners join
labor force**

Violence has to be reported not exploited

**Drug charges increase
over 1972, police told**

also becomes the victim. This is especially true in the area that concerns us — the law. A judge buys the trip that people who smoke pot are monsters and makes loud proclamations to the press that no one — but no one — who appears in his court for the monstrous crime of 'pot possession' can expect mercy. Two days later there stands his son, one of propaganda's victims.

This year many lifers have a numb feeling as they puzzle over the reasons why the authorities suddenly tightened up on issuing temporary passes. They blame everyone, including themselves, but don't realize they're the victims of subtle propaganda. In November, 1974,

newspapers took straightforward publicity handouts from the Solicitor General's Department, then reworked and slanted the statistics. The insidious oily fabric of the final stories indicated the slippery texture of propaganda. One story reported that 18 killers at Cowansville Penitentiary had been allowed out on temporary passes. The story then went on to state that Arthur Gagnier failed to return and was being sought in connection with a double killing in Montreal.

Dig it, man?

Another story reported that 2,254 *murderers* got absence passes in the first nine months of 1974. Anyone reading that headline would visualize 2,254 *murderers* out prowling the night looking for new victims. It doesn't give any breakdown as to the percentage of those passes each lifer got; nor does it give any clue as to the type of murderer granted temporary passes. The story goes on to state that 121 inmates used their passes to escape but doesn't state how many of these migrant dudes were lifers.

We get the same kind of slanted stories regarding parole violations and the increase in the number of paroles granted. Publicity bores down on the number of parole violators. Scare headlines are splurged across the front pages of newspaper when some insignificant incompetent petty thief out on parole is captured prowling some bankrupt filling-station. The natural result of all this propaganda publicity is that the members of the parole board become apologetic, curtail paroles granted and make silly stringent demands on parolees, demands that make incarceration often preferable to parole. This vicious bit of propaganda that affects the lives, freedom and happiness of inmates, their wives, children and parents, is mostly the responsibility of the various police associations.

Possibly the most sick and effective piece of propaganda to emerge in our modern age is that regarding what's known as the drug problem. (This subject is so vast and important it deserves a special treatment, one that's in the making.) People reading all the inflated statistics regarding drug addiction; its devastating influence on our society and all the other nonsensical drivel are led to believe that all this crap is the utterances of tragic sorrow gushing from the empathetic hearts of our nation's bleeding deacons. They aren't aware that the financial security of thousands of legitimate citizens depends on keeping drugs in the headlines as one of our

great menaces. It's nudged communism right out of the limelight and one can always tell when there are rumors down in the caverns of Ottawa that the budget for enforcing archaic asinine drug laws is about to be slashed. The headlines regarding drugs get bigger and blacker. Reports on the number of convictions surge upward as the narc squads and the informers get reminders to get the lead out. It becomes a vicious circle in which everyone from school children to old grandpappies find themselves corraled.

A study of about 100 news clippings from news stories, editorials and articles appearing in 1974 makes one aware of the constant barrage of propaganda affecting alleged law-breakers. Out of that many, only two news items appeared that gave a hint of favor toward our prison inmates. Both of these were news releases from Inger Hansen, Canada's prison ombudswoman-correctional investigator. Any gambler would tell you that's pretty rough odds. The sad part of the whole propaganda picture is that the thousands of people who are the victims of this vicious machine have no way of combatting it. The prison publications and the rare, unique, objective journalist willing to give fair reports are about as effective as a member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir suffering from laryngitis. Perhaps someday, if and when prisoners can establish an effective union then they might also establish enough clout to at least be a whispering influence.

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PENITENTIARY

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TO STUDY DISSOCIATION

OTTAWA — The Honourable Warren Allmand, Solicitor General of Canada, announced the appointment of a study group to look into the use of dissociation in federal penitentiaries.

Under the chairmanship of Dr. Jim Vantour, of Carleton University, the Study Group will carry out its examination of dissociation procedures in ten federal penitentiaries. The group members will start their visits early in May and expect to have their report completed by the end of October 1975.

Dissociation is the removal of an inmate from the general inmate population for two basic purposes: to protect certain types of inmates from harassment by other inmates (protective custody); to serve as a means of punishment for serious disciplinary offences (segregation).

Segregation is a disciplinary measure used as a last resort, after other less rigorous forms of punishment have been considered. Its desirability was, however, questioned by the Correctional Investigator, Ms. Inger Hansen, in her recent

report to Solicitor General Warren Allmand.

With this in mind, the study group will look into the use of dissociation at a medium and a maximum security institution in each of the Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario and Pacific Regions, as well as at the maximum security Saskatchewan Penitentiary and the Mountain Prison, a medium security institution near Agassiz, B.C.

The Study Group will examine the usefulness of dissociation as a method of punishment, its effectiveness as a means of protecting inmates and the living conditions in both types of dissociation - protective and punitive - from the point of view of humane treatment and the effects of prolonged isolation.

The group members will then share their findings with the Correctional Investigator and make recommendations for the continuation or modification of existing dissociation procedures and suggest alternatives.

Dr. Vantour, chairman of the Study Group, is assistant professor of sociology at St. Patrick's College, Carleton University. The holder of a Ph.D. in sociology, he was assistant director of a Senate parole study that resulted in the publication of the book entitled "Parole in Canada".

The other members of the group are Jean Lavoie, security project officer at the Canadian Penitentiary Service, in Ottawa, formerly assistant director of security at the Stony Mountain medium security institution in Manitoba; and Roger Fournier, parole officer with the National Parole Service in Moncton, New Brunswick.

The Study Group will also draw upon the expertise and experience of two other members of the Canadian Penitentiary Service. They are Dr. George Scott, director of the Ontario Regional Psychiatric Centre, in Kingston, and J.W. (Willie) Gibbs, Living Units and Human Relations Division, in Ottawa, formerly assistant director of socialization at the Springhill medium security institution, in Nova Scotia.

Above is a verbatim press release from the Solicitor General.

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NOTES AND OTHER CLUTTER



If you're wondering how May and June news can get into this March-April issue, just accept we're a little slow around here.

All we have to say right now about the recent incident at New Westminster is said on our cover.

A look at our masthead presents Pat Ryan, a familiar face to many and a legend to many others.

Pat gives us the lead article in this issue, a report on the situation for women in prison. This is especially timely, it being International Women's Year and all — and more so because a lot of women's groups are forming around the country; groups made up of ex-prisoners, prisoners' wives, and just interested women.

We recently received a note from a Prince Albert jail inmate outlining some of his experiences while he'd been imprisoned in Millhaven and Stony Mountain. The note contained several allegations, which we are now checking, as well as several others which we know to be true and have publicized previously.

Unfortunately, the allegations even if true could result in court action against us if we printed them — a court action we would probably lose because the inmate writer did not give us his name in his note, and we would probably need his supporting testimony in our own defence.

Here we can only express our regret that we cannot print the material, or anyone's material unless we know who wrote it. We can appreciate the desire to be anonymous; we hope in the same context contributors can appreciate our right and our need to know, for, after all, we too are vulnerable. We are prepared to protect our sources, but we insist that we know our sources.

By the way, to the anonymous writer, we are particularly pursuing the Stony Mountain allegations, and if we can accumulate enough factual material you'll see it in a forthcoming issue.

Correcting Corrections

a conference

October 20-24

topics

THE DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION MOVEMENT (OCTOBER 20)

THE PRISONER AS PATIENT (OCTOBER 21)

NATIVES AND CORRECTIONS (OCTOBER 22)

PRISONER'S RIGHTS (OCTOBER 23 and 24)

key participants

Mr. William R. Outerbridge, Chairman
National Parole Board
Solicitor General, Canada

Mr. Donald R. McComb, Director
Justice Councils
Attorney-General
Province of British Columbia

Professor Robert Martinson
Department of Sociology
The City University of New York

Dr. Seymour L. Halleck
Director of Student Psychiatry
University of North Carolina

Professor Ronald Price, Supervisor
Correctional Law and Legal Assistance Project
Faculty of Law
Queen's University, Kingston

Ms. Inger Hansen
Correctional Investigator
Solicitor General, Canada

Mr. Walter Echo-Hawk, Co-Director
Prison Project
Native American Rights Fund

Professor Douglas Schmieser, Dean
Faculty of Law
University of Saskatchewan

Professor John Irwin
Department of Sociology
San Francisco State College

Mr. Arthur Montague, Executive Director
Transition Society
Saskatoon

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in preparation:

WILLS & ESTATES: CRIMINAL PROCEDURES: YOUTH AND THE LAW: etc.

NOTE: Much of the material covered in these booklets is B.C. provincial law.

Our mistake

In a story appearing in Saturday's paper under the headline "man jailed on drug charge" Ian Thomas was incorrectly identified as the accused. In fact, he was the arresting officer. The Manitoba man charged with the offence was William Loewen.

the Star-Phoenix

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Words from Inside

Acid clear perspectives on existence: these are "Words From Inside", a collection of writings by Canadian inmates. Excerpts from Norman Poole's book, *Halfway to the Factory*, soon to be published; Edmund Watts' *Portrait on a Prison Wall*; the poignancy of *The Jail's Family Home* by Daryl Mitchell; Simple and abstract, the Words range through human experience.

"Words From Inside" is published each year by the Prison Arts Foundation, a national charitable organization established to promote creative activity in Canadian prisons, and to provide educational and rehabilitative opportunities.

"Words From Inside" '74 can be ordered from the Prison Arts Foundation, 143 Fifth Avenue, Brantford, Ontario, for \$2.00 a copy, including mailing costs. Two earlier issues, '73 and '72, are also available at \$1.35 each.

Letters

Gay Liberation

The letter below came in to us awhile ago, but until now we lacked space to print it. As a response to *Transition's* page ten, Aug-Sept. issue, it's what we had hoped for, nearly. We would have preferred a suggestion that homosexual practises be "legalized" in the prisons. No prisoner group is strong enough, yet, to make this happen but the Gay Lib movement may be. If not, then surely some effort could be directed toward developing Gay Lib chapters inside the prisons. Here's the letter.

Dear brothers:

Your slam against the gay liberation movement (Aug. - Sept., p. 10), is an ugly smear on an otherwise first rate and encouraging issue.

Nobody could be more concerned about prison conditions and more behind you in your efforts to organize than we are. Many of us end up in prison being punished for "crimes" that are no more than the act of love. Usually we are among the first of the cons to be sent to the medical centers for a "cure". Lots of us are forced to risk arrest daily in public places trying to seek one another out for a quick moment of sexual satisfaction. Straight society is on our back all day and all night.

From what our many gay brothers in prison tell us, there are a lot of cons on their backs too. Your nine lines of shit calling us "queers" — do you still call black men "niggers? — prove it. Your contempt for us is shown by your terror lest "the public" think you are "all queer". So what if you were? We are not ashamed of being gay and neither should any man be.

We are as much against rape as you are. But we also suspect that some of the biggest rapists in the prisons are the very same ones who, terrified of being thought "queer", have to prove their "manhood" by forcing some poor gay to "take it in the ass" — since there are no women available to victimize, they use us, considered worse than women, cocksuckers, to show others their sacred "masculinity". You can have your goddam masculinity, and all the fuck-ups it brings you. But don't expect us to take it, lying down or any way.

Instead of putting us down and poisoning your readers minds against us, why not try listening to some of our brothers in your midst? How about some protection for us in your union demands? There are a hell of a lot of gay men around, and it won't take them long to see whether the prison trade unions are going to shit on them, like everyone else . . . when you're on the bottom of the pile, there's always someone even lower to shit on — the faggots. No more, baby.

I am an active member of the Gay Alliance Toward Equality in Toronto, but this is my letter, not theirs.

Sincerely,
Terence Phillips

Who Works?

The population of Canada is 22 million, but there are 7 million over 65 years of age leaving 15 million to do the work. People under 21 total 10 million leaving 5 million to do the work. 2 million government employees leave 3 million to do the work. Five hundred thousand in the armed forces leave 2,500,000 workers. Deduct 1,-250,000 provincial, municipal and city employees which leaves 1,250,000 to do the work. There are 250,000 people in hospitals, asylums, etc., leaving 1,000,000 to do the work. But 700,000 of these are unemployed and 200,000 are on welfare or won't work, so that leaves 100,000 to do the work. Now it may interest you to know that there are 80,000 people out of the country at any one time and 19,998 people in jail so that leaves just two people to do all the work. And that is you and me, Brother, and I'm getting tired of doing everything by myself!

So, let's get with it!

— Anonymous

Some of the Issues, Some of the Comments

A meeting between some prison people and some street people was recently held in Millhaven. Below is the gist of it. The accompanying comments express one inmate's view.

MEMBERS:

Remember, our visitors from the outside do not relate very well to our environment.

So, we must speak on issues of major importance. I have drawn up a loose "Terms of Reference." It is asked that we stick to specifics owing to the time factor.

- (1) Solitary Confinement
- (2) Self-Improvement Groups
- (3) Union, P.S.A. (controls prison policy from the beer parlour of local legion hall.)
- (4) Swackhammer Commission (a lot of wasted paper on that.)
- (5) What do 'Outside' people believe? (Whatever the system puppets tell 'em.)
- (6) Is the Penitentiary Service Anti-Social? (Yes.)
- (7) Purpose and Direction of Millhaven Institution (Detain, Dehumanize, Release.)
- (8) Communication (none)? (Some! club, gas, handcuffs, shackles, strip cells, hole, seg.)
- (9) Security vs. Rehabilitation (need I say more!)
- (10) Is the Director a brilliant Public Relations Man? (No, but he is working at it!)

It is hoped that we all learn something this evening.

Geo

CATALYST

A new periodical published by Prison Arts and edited by Etienne Boisjoli; \$5.00 a year from Prison Arts foundation, 143 Fifth Avenue, Brantford, Ontario; free to prisoners. Most literary reviews can lay claim to being pretentious, ego-tripping, esoteric, formless masses of print and pretty pictures — and not much else. Sometimes the first issue is actually the last gasp.

But bright, breezy *Catalyst* breathes now and with luck will continue to breathe. And *Catalyst* squeezes past most of the artsy-fartsy mincing and prattlings so torturous to anyone who wants a little information or just a good read.

Catalyst is its own review. Try it, buy it; we did.

THE QUEST FOR NOAH'S ARK

John W. Montgomery

Published by Bethany Fellowship Inc.
Minneapolis 1972

Stories of the ark and the destruction of all other life, as related in the Old Testament, are some of the most captivating and prevalent throughout the world. The transitions of cultures from Persia to Sweden, from China to Alaskan Eskimos, from Brazil to the Fiji Islands consistently include tales of the ark, destruction by flood, and the preservation of select humans. The point of obvious: either each developed independently, or the eight people saved in the ark carried that story through generations and repopulated the whole world.

This book is the most complete historical record of that destruction and the evidence in support of it. Evidence, of course, in the form of the ark which supposedly came to rest on Mt. Ararat in Turkey and which is preserved beneath the ice covering of the mountain.

The book itself is fascinating. It presents over two dozen verified accounts of sightings and recovery of pieces of petrified wood claimed to be from the ark. Easily understood and written in a gentle, readable style, one becomes caught up in the ever-increasing credibility of the evidence and the hope that this book will tell it all, somehow.

Well, it doesn't. At the end one feels "left out in the world" because there are no conclusions. The question "Is Noah's Ark on Ararat?" is left unanswered — perhaps rightfully so. The consequences of a definite "yes" are too final. Therefore each reader can interpret the evidence as he likes, either dismissing it or finding some personal satisfaction and faith in it.

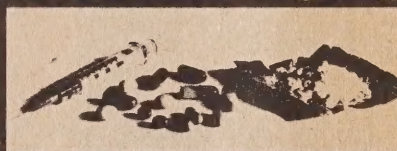
Depending on one's state of mind it would be a rather moving experience, or, again, the book would be good for a laugh too.

*In the morning the sun climbs the wall
Night still tarries in the depths of the prison . . .
and comes knocking;
the door stays shut,
Being chained is a luxury to compete for.
The chained have somewhere to sleep,
the unchained haven't . . .
The state treats me to its rice,
I lodge in its palaces,
Its guards take turns escorting me -
Really the honor is too great.*

(Written in Chinese Nationalist Prison, 1942)

Ho Chi Minh 1890 - 1969

If these things
kind of scare you,



isn't it great you feel at home
with these?



Perhaps it's a case of the drug you know is better than the drug you don't know. That's normal. But how much do you really know about alcohol?

One of the first things to acknowledge is that alcohol is a drug. As such, it can produce physical and emotional changes in you. And you could get to depend on it — either physically or emotionally.

Alcohol is a "downer".

Although it's usually thought of as a stimulant because of the way it warms up the party, alcohol is really a mild depressing drug. This means it numbs your mind to the realities around you. It can also surface emotions you may have been keeping under wraps.

If there's a neighbor who bugs you, a friend you hate, or someone you'd like to take a poke at, you might state all of these things after one or two rounds of drinks. The same thing goes for romantic intentions. Once alcohol lets the lid off things, you may do and say a lot of things you'll wish you hadn't.

It doesn't stop there.

Alcohol also slows your judgment, slurs your speech and makes fast action virtually impossible.

Of course, it's one drug that's legal. So whether or not you drink is strictly up to you. All we ask is that you think about it. That way you can always be in control. Whether you're having a glass of wine or a drink at a party. Or just enjoying a quiet beer at home.

Alcohol. Give it some thought.

aware



HACKSAW

Millhaven

The assault causing bodily harm trial of Millhaven Institute inmate Joseph Wydryk finished here recently with a dismissal.

Charges against Wydryk, the 28 year old former resident of Toronto and England, were dropped after testimony from five inmate witnesses.

Wydryk was alleged to have struck peace officer Guard Gerald Carmichael, in the course of his duty, and caused injury to his face.

The five witnesses, Thomas Daniel, Brian Stevenson, Phillip Reade, Alfred Kaltenbac and Andrew Snitzer, all said Carmichael hit Wydryk.

(See Nov. - Dec. Transition).

Ontario

The enquiries into violence by Don Jail guards and Metro Toronto Police are making as tragic news as the Swackhammer Report on Kingston-Millhaven violence. What bets they receive the same horrified sighs from the public, then get buried in some library's reference

department as did the Swackhammer Report?

The sensationalism ignores two things — only a minority of inmates and people charged with offences are violent, and only a minority of police and correctional workers are violent. It's worth remembering that when accusations start to fly. It's also worth remembering that the inquiries and reports have a similarity to the mouthings of a political candidate — "sound and fury, signifying nothing".

New Westminster

The conviction and subsequent absolute discharge of seven B.C. Pen'y guards on assault charges has done it to a few more illusions about our courts. The Penitentiary Act clearly states that any employee convicted under the criminal code is to be forthwith dismissed. It also clearly states that assaulting prisoners is a no-no. The absolute discharges saved their jobs, the Solicitor General says hacking up an inmates'

face is o.k. for security reasons. What the hell, by this logic the guards could arm themselves with machetes and start amputating legs for security reasons and, if charged, absolute discharges would save the jobs.

Prince Albert

Recently the CPS announced it had hired eight new guards for the Saskatchewan Penitentiary. The eight had been among 200 odd workers laid off when the Burns meat packing plant in P.A. closed down.

This hiring filled most of the vacancies at the prison, but an attempt to hire some ex-Burns people for Drumheller failed because no one wanted to relocate.

We wonder about the motivation of the new guards. Presumably, meat is meat and a job is a job; hardly the sort of attitude conducive to effective correctional work.

Edmonton

Late last year a Fort Saskatchewan jail inmate died of a severe Epileptic seizure. During the

nine days he was being held on remand he received medication on only three of them, despite the jail staff knowing he was epileptic. "We do not feel that any one certain member (of staff) is at fault but the system needs changing."

If any inmate in the country, or any other reader, has ever won an acquittal in court with the defence of a "faulty system", please let us know. We might not need our radicals, revolutionaries, strikes, and other social change agents after all. If we blame our crimes and our negligences on the social system or the economic system, the courts will order changes in the system and cut us loose.

Police check 'walk on water' sect

We were browsing some year-old English newspaper the other day and found this. It's not exactly *Transition* material but still we decided we should pass it along.

Great Yarmouth, June 1. Police are investigating the Family Church of Jesus, a sect in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, whose members believe that they can walk on water. Two of them have been drowned.

Chief Supt. Fred Lilley announced yesterday: "We are investigating all matters concerning this sect and we will seek legal advice on the outcome of our inquiries."

The sect has its 'church' in a small terrace house, 43, Stafford Road, Great Yarmouth, and is led by Brother Leslie Hughes, described as a prophet.

Last July, John Richards (45), of Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, was found drowned in the River Yare, which reaches the sea at Great Yarmouth. He had twice previously been rescued from the same river. At the inquest, at which an open verdict was returned, it was stated that Mr. Richards

had been obsessed by the idea that, given enough faith, he could walk the waters.

Just over a month ago, John Watts (26), of Gorleston-on-Sea, a suburb of Great Yarmouth, stepped off a jetty into the sea and was drowned. His widow Rita alerted the police. "This church convinced John that he had the power to walk on water," she says. "I am sure that if it wasn't for these dangerous teachings he would be alive today."

Two months ago police found the body of Brother Hughes's wife, Ruth, laid out in the living room of the house. She was surrounded by members of the sect who said they were waiting for her to be lifted up to heaven.

Mrs. Hughes, who was 57, was found to have died from natural causes. But she had been dead for two days and her death had not been reported to any authority.

The police are also looking into an incident in 1972 when three people were taken from the house in Stafford Road to a psychiatric hospital.

They were in a trance and had apparently been chanting 'Baby Jesus, save me' non-stop for three days.



"Bitterness by Deception"

by James M. Smith

Why have I bitterness? For many reasons which people would not, or will not take the time to understand. They have never experienced the life inside, prison life, therefore it is impossible for any who have not done time, to say right out that they know what it is like or have a vague conception of the realities behind bars.

The guards who are employed here and many other prisons, (and I speak mainly of the security), have a streak of sadism in them while inside the prison, but once outside the prison, the fantasies of being the ruler and we the slaves, vanishes. It is a complete change over from sadism to pacifism. In society they have to face people, who in fact can tell them to go to hell, and their reactions are different for they have lost their power, so to speak. I say not all guards are as described above. I find it is the younger ones who have the tendency to get carried away, more so than the staff who have been here for awhile.

Another thing is the hassles a man or a woman in prison must go through each day. For one, He or She, no matter what, will be confronted by the hassles of fellow inmates. These are usually minor, but once built up they are like a fuse, waiting for a match, which is usually the position of the staff.

No matter how hard one tries to evade these, it is almost impossible. You will always have the run in with staff. Walking away is from far the best solution because, if done, you will be charged with something such as "dumb insolence". Remember, this is going on twenty-four hours a day, one thousand four hundred and forty minutes per day, every day. Do I have to go into the seconds?

You know, people talk about rehabilitation: how can we improve this or that; should we try to build another prison and hope it will work out. Funny enough, that's what they're doing. Look at Matsqui Institution in Abbotsford, B.C. It

started out as a place for drug addicts; how many did it help? Now its open to the general public, one might say. They have a system called the "living unit program". This is where the custody take off their drab uniforms, and put on civies trying to be your buddy. Can you dig that?? The guy who charged you last month is your buddy today. They teach you perspectively how to lie! If you are a big enough liar, you can receive anything from a cell change to a parole. Not all, but then again, a high percentage of them are taken from "shotgun" to "counsellor". These are the ones who evaluate you while you are imprisoned there; the people who decide if you are ready to go on the street, whether it be for a pass or a parole.

It's like taking a man learning carpentry, putting him in front of a class of journeymen of this trade, and having this person explain to them how they are going to build a house. He might be right, but what are his chances, a million to one? In my view, this is the odds they have of rehabilitating someone through the prison systems which are now in use; to adjust them to the whims of society, but never to rehabilitate them in the true meaning of the word.

Well, the public sees the prisons of today being a vast improvement toward rehabilitating the prisoner. They hear of the pool tables, the shuffle-boards, card playing, televisions, sports etc.; this is all very fine and dandy. They never stop to think of the frustrations and the loneliness each man or woman undergoes. They never stop to think of the man's family which isn't rich enough to be able to come and visit him. They never think of the man who has no one, or that his family might not be there when he gets out. They see the "menu", but not the "meals" which is the opposite in most cases for the prisoners. They see and hear of all the great clubs

which are going in the institution, (which are good for most), but never see the loneliness of the prisoner when he or she, returns to their cell. Yes they hear a lot, but thats about as far as their knowledge goes.

They never stop to realize that our lives are entrapped in an area of about one mile square. Could you live in an area a mile square for, say, five, maybe ten years, and be released in a normal state of mind??

If You're Gonna Play, You Gotta Pay!

People say "Well, you done the crime, prepare to do the time." Isn't that just about one of the most childish ways to evade a problem which they are scared to cope with? Nowadays the time given to a person convicted of certain crimes such as heroin and armed robbery, are grossly "over-given". I figure most crimes are well paid for. Just because I have a past record, and I'm found guilty of, say, a theft under, I'll receive a maximum sentence, which is two years less one day. Is this fair, when someone on his first or second offence gets a probation period or a fine?

If I have a respected name, and lots of money, plus I am well known, such as a celebrity or a member of parliament, I am omitted from just about any crime which is possible, or receive an "under-sentenced" amount of time when the person who possibly has a past record, and is up for the same crime, will end up serving an unbelievable amount of time. One is looked at as a minor offence, the other is a major one, though the crime might very well be the same.

When a judge sentences someone does he really realize what he is committing the person to, or, should I say, demanding of a person's life, If not, he should be put here, in a prison, until he learns the hell he is condemning this person to go through for a certain amount of years. And again I say, a person just

touring a prison, or even working at one, has no conception of the life behind bars. If there be a person, let him step forward now, so as I may call him the biggest liar I have ever seen; and explain quietly to them how this world of misconceptions they live in is only a crutch which they use to neglect the realities of the prison system that is now a real problem in our society.

The only persons who have the true meaning of what it is like in a prison are the prisoners themselves, or a person from a concentration camp. A person from a concentration camp explaining what it was like then, is like a prisoner trying to explain what it is like inside a prison to a person who has never experienced it.

You may feel full of knowledge when you leave a discussion on and about prisons, but in all respects you are just as ignorant as when you stepped into the conversation. Words can not describe feelings, they can only be felt. Could you ever describe a picture to its fullest or a thought, or even an event in your life? No one I know has ever accomplished such a feat.

Yes, I guess you could say I'm generalizing, because in no way can the detail be described. I can only say my bitterness is true, and until the ignorance of society is lifted, my bitterness, and that of many more like myself, will continue to flow through the corrupted state we are in now. Being ignorant is like being a baby: to mature, the knowledge must be found. Without it you remain a baby, an ignorant one at that.

Legalization of Crime

As for the way I would categorize the world today, I would have to say; *Legal Crime* - such as Parliament and high society upper class. *Society* - the middle man, the working Joe, and the ignorant. *Illegal Crime* - the lower class of society, convicts, people who are rejected by the two previous, sometimes even by their own.

Legal crime - runs the lives of all the people, believe it or not. Most people either fantasize at the hope of being in their position, or have an over-sized passion of hate. What is it better to do: be a fantasizer or a per-

son of hate? These people of the legal crime are the controllers. They set the rules no matter what the public thinks, and are given special privileges, excluding themselves from the law they have just finished passing. Therefore by paying out sums of money to people such as Judges, Parliament members, Police Commissions, etc., they are protecting themselves from these laws they have been passing, and also satisfying the public by giving stern laws protecting the innocent people, but not as well as themselves.

Have you listened to how they plan to eventually diminish all jails? I doubt if I will ever see the day, yet it's supposed to start in about four years. When the time comes, a new party will be elected and the commitments made by the preceding party will be overruled. Thus the party elected will remain so until they over-commit themselves, and flaw in some way to have the other party elected.

Society - is full of people ignorant to what is happening around them. I explain by asking how many know in full their actual rights as a citizen; how many know how the Penal Institutions are truly run, or even how they look from inside? How many can truly say they are happy with what's happening in the world today, or even what's not happening?? Most only care about themselves and their consistent life cycles. Why should they want to care? Because as I've said, ignorance, like a baby, is unknowing. Some know, but are too stupid to realize the full meaning of it.

They are getting it from both sides: Illegal crime is getting them for their money by stealing it, yet legal crime is hitting them by ways of over-taxing, high food prices, inflation in all, when in reality there's no need for the rising costs. The higher the costs, the more Illegal Crime there is because there are more people who are not that well off. There is nothing done by the people because, as in the case of prison guards, they are spineless people, not wanting to make waves in fear of losing what little they have.

Illegal crime - In reality, in my point of view, is as any other job.

The risks are higher, and in a lot of cases they are not worth it. People must have a certain respect for cons, for though they commit crimes, the excitement they have, and the thrill behind their work does not occur in the average Joe's life cycle. The cons in all respects are not out to get society at all. Their main goal and objective is legal crime: either to work for it, or destroy a link or two out of hate, seeing full well what it (Legal crime) is doing to the world.

Upon release, a con's bitterness is directly or indirectly set out against Legal Crime. His bitterness is so strong, that in a high percentage, he takes an escape route, either by drugs or alcohol. Usually while on this escape route, they commit their crime of some sort against society; thus returning to prison before meeting their goals or wishes completely. Thus their bitterness is much more dangerous because they are angry at their stupidity for falling short of their goal, wondering why they committed such a crime when they needed not do so, and because of committing the crime on someone who had never really inflicted or sparked the hate to begin with.

Only a few reach their goal in which they join Legal Crime or destroy a few links. In reality not many cons think about the consequences sincerely, but they feel they will not be caught, so they don't worry about the verdict.

Cons need support, and society needs knowledge and leaders. Cons have both in unbelievable numbers. Therefore if the two were ever to unite just for the instant of the issue to be rid of Legal Crime, I believe that most, if not all crime, would diminish. People again could trust each other, and have no want to prove anything to anyone, or anything . . .

What you see is a sampling of the Transition Society's first major attempt at public fund-raising since our 1971 Burglar's Ball turned out to be the most costly private party Saskatoon ever saw.

With the help of the Saskatoon Native Women's organization and a small army of volunteers we managed to get together a three-day bazaar at the local Indian-Metis Friendship Center which featured inmate hobbycraft sales, raffles galore, bingo games, black-jack tables, and wheels of fortune.

Along with all this were rows of booths displaying everything from native crafts to pottery to literature on birth control.

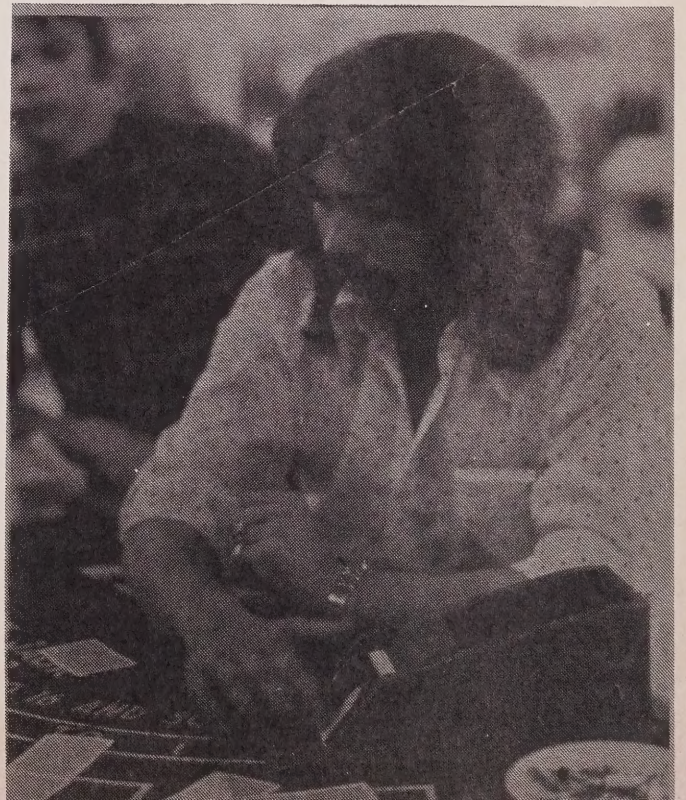
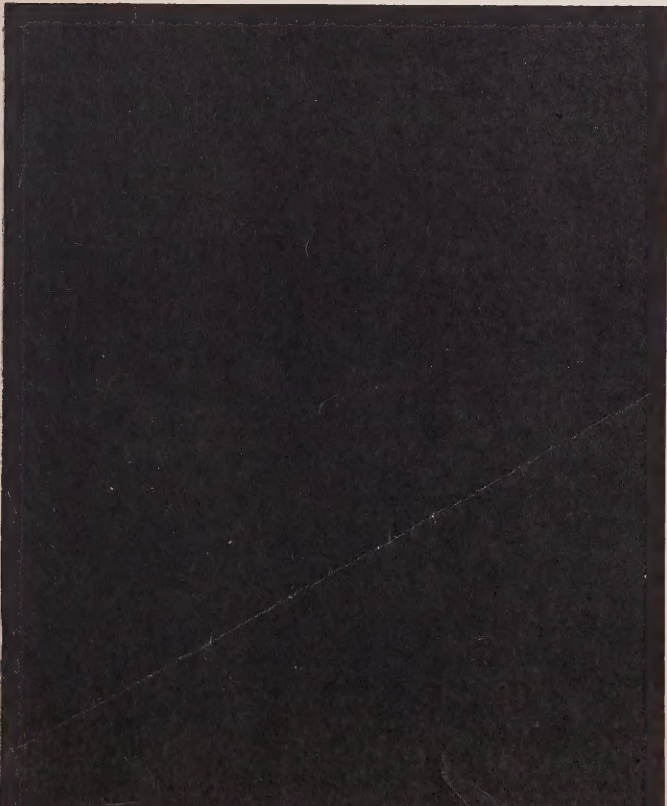
And ironically perhaps, we went out and hired two genuine Rent-a-Cops to guard the whole thing. You can't be too safe these days, you know!

Profits from the bazaar are going toward augmenting our operating budget for summer programs here in Saskatoon.

Broad support from local businesses saved the day for us. Most of the support came as contributions of prizes. Our thanks go out to the following firms:

Yamaha Music	ukulele
Simpsons Sears	cosmetics
MacLeods	fishing reel
Handicraft Supplies	craft kits
Chimo Shell	gas
Westgate Shell	gas and lube job
Safeway (H & 20th)	gift certificate
Co-op (22nd St.)	gift certificate
MacDonalds	gift certificate
Days Paint	paint
Living lighting	candle
Collier Music House	guitar
Gulf (Cumberland)	car washes and gas
Fairweathers	sweater set
Arthur Rose Cleaners	dry cleaning tickets
Martinizing (8th St.)	dry cleaning tickets
Thams Photo	sitting certificate
Gibsons Photo	camera
Creative Professional Photographers	portraits
A fi W (8th St.)	dinner for four
A & W (Idylwyld)	dinner for four
Intercontinental Packers	\$25 certificate





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Prisoner blasts Bannerman

The following open letter to KKNW broadcaster Gary Bannerman was sent to the Western Voice by a prisoner at the B.C. Penitentiary. Bannerman was one of the intermediaries in the recent attempt of three prisoners to get out of prison and escape to a foreign country.

The reference in the letter to Mike Platko concerns an earlier hostage-taking incident in which prisoner Platko demanded transfer from the B.C. Pen to the psychiatric prison [Regional Medical Center or RMC]. Bannerman had been involved in mediating with Platko.

The author signed the letter as "A friend of Andy Bruce".

Dear Mr. Bannerman, I am reluctant to write to you about this matter because I'm thinking that there might be some way that you can get yourself some more publicity, or use to your advantage any comments that I might make. I certainly don't wish to help you with your "career", which seems lately to be, especially in

were so sure about Mary Steinhouser having a knife run into her, and you were so sure about Louise Stratton having sexual intercourse with Claire Wilson at the exact time that the assault by the hostages and guards took place, while after all these were things that other people told you and are, in fact, false. In general, you seem to be always so sure that no one in the administration at the B.C. Pen, or the N.W. Police etc., could or would lie to you and you've put your foot squarely in your big mouth quite a few times by repeating what "they" have told you.

Now, in regards to Andy's Mother, I expect it doesn't really matter to you anyway, so I'm not going to list all the times she has visited him and helped him, but I will mention one time very recently—and that was at the Indian Club's Workshop when she was here for a five-hour visit in the gymnasium. Someone in the administration gave you the information that she "never visits him" and you believed it because you think that these pigs never lie. Again you were taken in but I suspect that you had

not get so sanctimonious about what a great guy you are and how rotten everybody is on the other side of the fence because if you take a good look at yourself you'll see that you're not so perfect as you make out.

Another thing I would like to mention: You have stated that the psychiatrists' reports here have indicated that A. Bruce, C. Wilson and D. Lucas were "dangerous psychopaths", and you entirely agreed on that assessment. Well, I would like to say that from whatever standards or criteria he might judge, the doctor could be right or wrong. I don't know. "Dangerous" is a relative term. For example, you're dangerous from my point of view. The point I would like to make here is that the psychiatrist you were so ready to believe here is also the same one you called "senile and incompetent" in the Platko case. Was his assessment and treatment woefully lacking in the Platko case, but not in this last one? Is this psychiatrist only competent or incompetent when it suits your fancy? And who are you? You seem to be speaking out of three sides of your

I'm a good friend of Andy Bruce's and I'm proud of it. I also feel very sad about the death of Mary Steinhouser.

regard to this latest episode at the B.C. Pen, preying on the misery of other people and using it to your advantage in any way you can.

But, in reference to your comments on Monday June 16 about Andy Bruce's Mother, I feel that I must say something. You remarked that you thought it "peculiar" that all of a sudden she has a "bleeding heart" for her son when she hasn't even visited him since last November and now she is concerned because he's in the hospital near death.

First of all, I suspect you made that comment expecting to get a reaction from one of his relatives who would call you and then you could milk the call for what it was worth to you. After all, your publicity was waning on this thing and you needed some new "blood".

Secondly, you don't know what you are talking about, which seems to be the case quite frequently lately. You

no need to be "taken in" because you are already there.

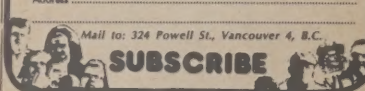
While on the subject of visiting people Mr. Bannerman, how about Mike Platko? That "poor little guy", as you called him. How many times have you visited him since you last milked his "pathetic" case for all the publicity you could get? Are you aware of exactly how much help he got at R.M.C.? Are you aware of how long he has been back here in the hole? Your follow-up in that case was very poor and I didn't think of great humanitarian instincts come to the fore until you had opportunity to mention that you had experience in hostage matters when you were unfortunately called in on this most recent one. You were thinking ahead, possibly you could get an hour or so show out of Platko's misery again if you played your cards right.

I'm well aware, Mr. Bannerman, of what a reporter's job is, but let us

western VOICE

* Enclosed is \$10. Please send me the next 52 issues, or 5 for 26 *

Name _____
Address _____



Women prisoners speak out

The women prisoners of the Lower Mainland Regional Correctional Centre (in which the words correctional centre are in themselves a complete farce), wish to publicly announce their sincere sympathy against treatment shown prisoners: Claire Wilson, Andrew Bruce and Dwight Lucas during the recent happening at the B.C. Penitentiary.

It is our belief that the criminal justice system in general and the correctional system in particular is completely at fault.

The degrading, inhuman treatment of prisoners as a whole, in institutions, not only in British Columbia, but all across Canada, in no way benefits society. It does not help rehabilitate the oppressed prisoner in any way, shape or form. It is not only a detriment to the prisoner but to the Canadian people as a

whole. These institutions are nothing but breeding factories of torture, which turn normal individuals into either mentally withdrawn or bitter victims of their cruelties.

If people are to be punished for designating acts by society, their complete isolation from society alone is punishment enough.

To be treated like animals and locked away in solitary confinement, such as these men and many others are and were, is a totally demoralizing act completely against the Bill of Human Rights.

We believe it is time the government and peoples of Canada demanded a complete investigation of the judicial and prison systems across Canada.

Sincerely,
Jan Taylor.

ing all their good intentions which are lies, then I can certainly understand why he would say "Fuck that!" and not have any desire to emulate you, or be in any way involved with the system you so ably represent. I can understand him, being satisfied with his own principles and ethics which, however dark and nebulous they might seem to you, at least make some sense to him—and obviously he was ready to die for them.

I'm a good friend of Andy Bruce's and I'm proud of it. I also feel very sad about the death of Mary Steinhouser. You could never

understand how I can reconcile the two (though I do, very clearly) because you don't really think about anything beyond your own world. This is my mind. The "criminal" mind as you would call it. But, what have you got to offer that's so much better? Hypocrisy, lies, greed, and ignorance is all that I can see.

If you have any class at all you will apologize publicly to Mrs. Bruce for what you said. It will surprise me if you do.

Sincerely yours,
A friend of Andy Bruce

SPECIAL REPORT ON THE B.C. PEN

The chain of command

by Mordecai Briemberg

"The Dragon" kept emphasizing to us the "chain of command". "The Dragon" is the nickname of Dragan Cernetic, Warden of the BC Penitentiary. We were the five intermediaries who the prisoners had requested when they took sixteen prison workers as hostages.

The "chain of command", in which Cernetic is one link, stretches from the Solicitor-General, Warren Allmand, and his colleagues in the Cabinet in Ottawa down to the members of the tactical squads who ultimately shot and killed hostage Mary Steinhouser and critically wounded prisoner Andy Bruce.

But as Warden Cernetic emphasized, orders along the chain were from the top down.

It is this entire chain of command that shackled prisoners, and treated them with such continuous contempt as human beings that they became desperate enough to take hostages. So desperate they felt they had nothing to lose, not even their lives.

Either we get out of here and to another country or we come out on a slab. That was the way the three prisoners put it to us and there was no doubting their sincerity. An age-old cry: freedom or death.

At that point there was only one thing the "chain of command" should have done: acted with genuine concern and all haste to save the lives of 18 people, all the hostages and three prisoners.

But the chain of command chose a different priority. It chose to maintain its own "authority", the very authority that generated the desperation in the first place and that will continue to generate desperation like its own Siamese twin in the future.

Mary Steinhouser, from all the accounts of co-workers, prisoners and friends, understood only too well the standard operating procedure of this chain of command. She did what she could to change it. She valued other people's lives.

The chain of command did not value hers.

Now, as the Farris Inquiry investigates the events at the BC Pen, there is tugging and pulling along the chain. Sometimes the links act together. Sometimes they grate against each other, as each one tries to disclaim responsibility for the ultimate consequences of their particular actions.

Who killed Mary Steinhouser and critically wounded Andy Bruce? However they twist and tangle, one chain binds all the links—from the tiny room in the BC Pen vault to the chambers of the Cabinet in Ottawa.

Until that chain is shattered in its entirety, the lives of prisoners will continue to be treated with disdain and those of prison workers will be regarded by their superiors as expendable.

The chain of command also produces a chain reaction of fear to justify its own existence. In the first instance, people are driven by the misery of their own situation into criminal activity, sometimes violent. Then they are imprisoned and further brutalized. As a result violence becomes more and more their only way of responding. The prison system then uses our fear of this violence to justify still further brutalization, which results in still further violence, further fear, further brutalization.

So long as this cycle isn't broken the search for "secure" prisons is a pipe-dream. And the more desperate prisoners are made the less any further punishment is a "deterrent".

The prison system does not exist in a vacuum. It is part of an economic system that treats all working people simply as labour power for someone else's profit, to be used up and chucked out. So long as this profit system persists, which in the final analysis values lives less than property, for that long the formal prison too will continue to shackle and destroy and sacrifice women and men.



Dragan Cernetic, Warden of the BC Penitentiary, testifying at the Farris Inquiry into the hostage seizure and shoot-out.

They didn't do the one thing they should've: save lives.

Finding a foreign country

Throughout the ordeal the intermediaries had to press to get Ottawa to contact countries then press to find out what countries had been contacted and what their response had been and what alternatives remained.

Among the prison administration present at the BC Pen there was resistance to the intermediaries initiating independent contacts, either with government people in Ottawa or people elsewhere who might speed the process up or find countries themselves. Yet many of the steps forward that were made in sustaining negotiations resulted precisely

from intermediaries by-passing the "chain of command".

In the final instance, when a country was found that would accept the prisoners, this information was kept from the intermediaries who instead were told there was no further news from Ottawa. Yet precisely this new information, in my opinion, would have so reassured the hostages and prisoners that there would have been no moves for a break and no opportunity for the shoot-out that came at 1 a.m. Wednesday, with such deadly results. (Incidentally, Trudeau now says it never was his intention to allow the prisoners to get out the country without being returned. However,

the first list of countries contacted that Ottawa gave the intermediaries were identified specifically as ones with which Canada had no extradition treaty.)

Storming the vault

As early as Monday there apparently had been a plan to attack the vault, even though negotiations were continuing and even though there was a clear understanding with the intermediaries that no attack would be launched unless the prisoners killed any of the hostages. The manoeuvre planned by the head of BC Pen Security was countermanded by a higher prison administrator, by-passing the chain of command. This countermanding

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by Harold Gavin

The "Penhouse" at the B.C. Penitentiary is no swinging, luxury apartment. It's a series of cells, each ten feet by five feet, three solid concrete walls and one solid steel door with a five-inch square window opened from the outside.

A single light bulb burns 24 hours a day. Only cold water in a combination sink-toilet. Except for infrequent visits, no faces but the guards'. Sometimes special-heating, gagging, tear gas.

There are other names for the Penhouse. Officially it's the Special Corrections Unit or S.C.U. Solitary confinement. To the prisoners, it's simply "The Hole". And the hole is systematic torture.

When he and two other prisoners, who also had been in solitary, took hostages at the B.C. Pen, Bruce felt he had nothing to lose. "I'm dead here anyway," he told the intermediaries. He had been tear-gassed and beaten several times in solitary.

Bruce had taken a hostage before. In August 1972, with only one hour's notice, he had been transferred from the B.C. Pen to the Penitentiary in Prince Albert Saskatchewan. His very few personal possessions were lost in the transfer. His family discovered he was gone only when they went to visit and found he wasn't there. And in Prince Albert he again was put directly in the hole.

Not allowed even to write a letter, a month later he took a guard hostage and

of the prison bureaucracy issues its own regulations. Each always includes an explanatory regulation stating "the inmate will be informed of the kind of behaviour and acts which are unacceptable and considered offences". But prisoners rarely get even this basic information.

Not that it would help that much. If a particular inmate is singled out by the prison administration there always is the catch-all offence of "doing any act calculated to prejudice the good order of the institution". This can mean absolutely anything and often is used against prisoners who are organizing to improve prison conditions.

In short, a prisoner, supposedly being punished for his lack of respect for

son Street Community Corrections Centre wrote to their boss, Solicitor-General Warren Allmand, and effectively laid their jobs on the line. "Trapped without hope in our present penal system, Lucas, Wilson and Bruce appeared to have nothing to lose by their actions". The Robson St. workers also pinpointed the broader problems of Canadian penitentiaries, calling for "meaningful, self-supporting work" for prisoners.

The Prisoners' Union Committee emphasize that Lucas, Wilson and Bruce "all came from poverty or working class backgrounds."

"To treat people like cage rats is to either crush them or cause an aggressive self-protection reaction. Violence breeds more violence."

Solitary confinement The prison within the prison

"It's hell. You feel like you're completely locked in. You can touch four walls around you for 23 hours a day. That's all you can do. Just walk around and look at the walls", said one ex-con. (As a gesture of great human compassion, prisoners in solitary get one hour a day exercise.)

Is it any wonder even the strongest are driven to desperation? We don't hear of their desperation when they try to kill themselves. But we do when they attempt to get free.

In the last four months two prisoners in particular—after long, long periods of solitary confinement—made a break for freedom. Donald Oag was in the hole three and one-half of the last four years. He made four escape and five suicide attempts. Andy Bruce, sentenced to life imprisonment in 1970, has spent four and one-half of the last five years in the hole.

made one single demand: to be returned to the B.C. Pen, where he at least could see his young child, who lived in B.C. A year later he was transferred back to B.C. and the hole.

PRISON LAWLESSNESS

Prisoners are sentenced to the hole by the "Warden's Court". The court is operated by the immediate superior of the guard who makes a charge against the prisoner. The prisoner can even be excluded from parts of the hearing. Invariably, if a guard alleges something and it is heard in Warden's Court, the prisoner is found guilty.

Guilty of what? Here too, arbitrariness prevails. In the prison system there are pages and pages of vague regulations, directives, divisional instructions and standing orders. Each level

the law, is subjected to a disciplinary system that itself arbitrarily violates the most elementary legal principles.

END SOLITARY

Louise Stratton, one of the hostages at the B.C. Pen, commented that "all three prisoners had been in solitary confinement for long periods of time. Solitary confinement triggered the whole thing. It's a horrid experience, one of the most awful things that prisoners can go through."

One of the first demands of Bruce, Lucas and Wilson during the B.C. Pen hostage events was that all inmates in solitary be released into the general prison population. But, when James Murphy, the regional director of penitentiaries, testified at the Farris Inquiry he didn't even mention this demand. Employees of the Rob-

In December last year, several B.C. Pen inmates, including Bruce and Oag, launched a legal suit against the Queen and Dragon ("B.C. Pen warden Dragan Cornetic), claiming that solitary confinement is "cruel and unusual punishment", contrary to the Canadian Bill of Rights, and should be declared illegal.

The Federal Court of Appeal, with the hysteria surrounding Oag's escape that had been whipped up by the local press at the time, ruled that the prisoners were too dangerous to appear together at their own case—even if they agreed to be shackled hand and foot. But the lawsuit itself is continuing in July.

In order for the case to be successful, it must be publicly supported by large numbers of Canadians who, knowing what solitary confinement really is and does, demand that the hole be abolished.

were proceeding. In fact the last words of the message, as reported to a meeting with intermediaries, were roughly: "we've cancelled your wife's appearance on the 11 o'clock TV news until we get your approval".

Final assault

The circumstances surrounding this are murkiest of all. But there are some most disturbing aspects. The Warden of the BC Pen outlined to the Farris Inquiry that the tactical squads had guards armed with batons and back-up armed with guns. What happened to the batons? Why was there the shooting when two prisoners, armed only with knives, and one

hostage, Mary Steinhauser were trapped in the office in front of the vault? According to one newspaper report, the autopsy showed Steinhauser was shot from a distance of less than 10 feet as she had gunpowder on her clothing.

Reports now are circulating among prisoners at the BC Pen that some prisoners heard the following sequence of sounds at 1 a.m. Wednesday: two shots; a terrible scream from a male voice; Mary Steinhauser yelling; don't shoot! don't shoot! two more shots; then a volley of shots.

Was there a pause between the shooting of Bruce and the shooting of Steinhauser? If so, why was Steinhauser shot?

"Underneath it all was a feeling of anger that Mary was held in such repute by the prisoners, and that she was less interested in the institution than she was in them."

by Tony Ashbourne

Will the bullet that killed Mary Steinhauser also help to bury the Canadian prison system?

It's no secret that many people outside the penitentiary service hope so. But the tragic seizure of hostages by three B.C. Penitentiary inmates this month

has pulled the wraps off a simmering conflict within the service itself, over the goals and methods of the "corrections" system.

Some prison workers are no longer able to contain their outrage at a system which pays lip service to the concept of "rehabilitation" but in reality brutalizes vindictively those people who have been driven to violate the criminal statutes.

It appears, too, that Mary Steinhauser herself—the hostage shot to death when prison guards burst into the storage vault where the captives were held—was a frequent critic of the repressive policies of the penitentiary, and endured the scorn of her superiors for her pains, to the point where she had decided on the weekend before her death to quit her job.

It's tempting to see the B.C. Penitentiary as an anachronism, a relic of a social order as outdated as its medieval architecture. Nearly everyone who has anything to do with it, including the solicitor-general and Pen director Dragan Cornetic, are on record as saying it shouldn't exist.

But the fact is that the Canadian justice system has all but given up on the permanent inmates at the B.C. Pen. These are the human beings for which the system has no further solutions. They are classed as "maximum security" inmates. Fantastic amounts of money are spent to control every facet of their daily life. Opportunities for education and training are given only grudgingly. In a system based on punishment rather than "correction", the B.C. Pen is the Big Stick over the head of every criminal and, ultimately, every citizen.

As a classification officer, Mary Steinhauser interviewed inmates arriving at the B.C. Pen to recommend whether they should remain there or be transferred to medium or minimum security institutions. For those who remained, she also recommended programs of educational and

work activity, helped organize group activities and appeared at parole board hearings.

But her friend and companion during that final weekend, Nat Hickerson, remembers how she told of the anger and frustration she felt when some of her efforts to help the prisoners on her caseload were thwarted.

"She was in continuous trouble at the Pen," Hickerson says. "She had a sense of balance which angered her immediate superiors, and the difficulties she ran into made going to work an agony."

"There were a number of official attacks on her. They had as their basis the violation of petty civil service rules, but they were really just a pretext for harassment. For instance, she left her door unlocked and left the office for five or ten minutes to go to the bathroom while prisoners were in the building, and for that she was given an official reprimand."

"Then there was an open argument she had with her supervisor. He'd been after her for a number of things she had in her files, and for spending too much time with the prisoners."

Anyone watching Cornetic on the witness stand at the Farris Inquiry into the hostage incident could understand the military thinking behind the Pen administration. Cornetic didn't set up a headquarters, he called it a "command post". He never decided to do something, he always "ordered" that it be done.

But why should Steinhauser be singled out for harassment? "Underneath it all was a feeling of anger that Mary was held in such repute by the prisoners, and general feeling that she was less interested in the institution than she was in them," Hickerson says.

"Mary's office was a hotbed of activity—she made it available to prisoners to call their lawyers or to aid in any way to pursue their legal rights. She refused to perceive her job as simply deciding whether a convict should be playing checkers or weaving baskets."

"She would say she wanted her job to make the hole in prison the best it could be, to open avenues for the prisoners, and I think this is primarily what brought the authorities' wrath upon her."

What depressed Stein-

hauser the most was the easy access prisoners had to alcohol and drugs. She told Hickerson liquor sold for \$50 a bottle inside the Pen, that many inmates seemed to find the money to pay for dope and booze, and that the authorities seemed to turn a blind eye to much of it.

As long as corruption was rampant inside the Pen, she reasoned, the inmates would never break out of the desperate world of crime which put them there in the first place.

Rehabilitation programs were at an "absolute minimum" in the Pen, she told Hickerson. Although she spent her working life trying to make things as pleasant as possible for the convicts on her caseload, she realized that without a fundamental reorientation there was little she could do.

Following Steinhauser's death, some prison workers could no longer keep silent about the practices against which they too rebelled. A group of employees at the minimum-security Robson Centre ignored a supervisor's warning to keep silent and issued a public statement attacking conditions throughout the penitentiary service.

Steinhauser died "because of the dehumanizing policies of this system which does nothing but provoke violent reaction or increasing alienation," it said. "Three men needing treatment were warehoused at large in the population at B.C. Penitentiary. Trapped without hope in our present penal system, they appeared to have nothing to lose by their actions."

One of the Robson workers, Rob Clark, told of Pen inmates being assigned to sweep snow off the lawns of the institution. That kind of activity, he said, wasn't exactly conducive to "rehabilitation."

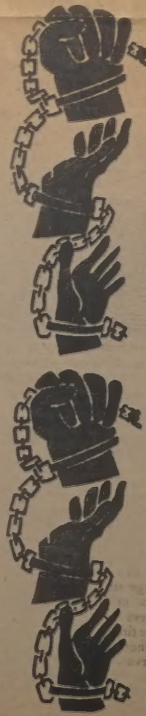
All prison workers, of course, do not hold similar views. Already, at the B.C. Pen inquiry, testimony has been heard from one of the classification officers taken hostage that can only be described as contemptuous of the inmates involved, displaying an utter lack of understanding of the processes which led up to the incident.

When one hostage, Louise Stratton, made some mild statements questioning the prison system and expressing sympathy with the inmates' plight, radio hot-liner Gary Bannerman

immediately attempted to discredit her by mouthing allegations about her alleged sexual involvement with one of the convicts.

With this kind of division among the parties involved, we might expect a debate about the prison system to become a central feature of the inquiry. The Vancouver Prisoners' Union Committee sought to do this by calling evidence and cross-examining witnesses at the hearings, but was denied the right to do so.

The burden thus falls on lawyers for the inmates, who have a specialized interest in the case. The chances that the inquiry will develop into a full-scale probe of the prison system are remote, if not non-existent. But regardless of that, the B.C. Pen incident has sparked a public debate which hopefully will lead to an understanding of the role of prisons in Canada's capitalist society, and the way both the prison system and the society can change.



Continued from previous page

caused a great flurry among BC Pen administrative staff and they had a private huddle apparently to clarify among themselves who was going to give orders to whom.

However this did not end the search for an opportunity to attack, even while negotiations continued. In fact there was a marked pattern in which each report of the prison staff who were observing the hostage situation tended to stress new tensions and dangers in the vault as well as the tiredness of the three prisoners. By contrast the observations of the intermediaries tended to record a stabilization and even relaxation of the tension in the vault and a continuing alertness on the part of the

three prisoners. In fact on their way to the final visit to the vault prison staff told the two intermediaries that the situation was very dangerous.

Curiously it was right after the final visit of intermediaries, that prison staff observations agreed with and indeed went even further in stressing the assessment of growing calm reported by the intermediaries. To my recollection this was the only time there was such agreement. Convinced all was quiet the intermediaries decided to leave the Pen for a short rest. Less than 45 minutes later the final assault took place.

Messages to the hostages

In testimony so far before

the Farris Inquiry prison officials have stressed that it always was understood that if the hostages decided to make a break then the tactical squads would move in. But to my recollection there was no explicit discussion of this contingency with the intermediaries. Rather there was the agreement, as I stated earlier, that negotiations would continue as long as possible and that the tactical squad only would be deployed if the prisoners initiated an attack on the hostages.

The prison administrators' current interpretation raises even more crucially the question of what kind of communications and signals were passed between